GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 19, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.
CENTRAL OFFICE, ROOM 11/HYBRID

MEMBERS PRESENT: Beverly Washington – Chairperson, Adrian Johnson – Vice Chairperson, Andrea Ackerman (remote), Sean Corcoran (remote), Mitch Shinbrot (left at 9:00 p.m.), Ian Thomas, Jay Weitlauf (remote/arrived at 6:04 p.m. & left at 9:44 p.m.), Jennifer White (left at 9:25 p.m.), Michael Whitney (remote)

ALSO PRESENT: Susan Austin, Anne Marie Mancini, Lauren Casini (remote), Sam Kilpatrick, Matt Brown, Amy McKenna, Carmita Hodge, Adam Diskin, Peter Bass, Jemal Davis, Samantha Singleton, Keith Danieluk, Ben Moon

I. CALL TO ORDER – Mrs. Beverly Washington, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Review of October 13, 2026, meeting Minutes –

MOTION: Shinbrot, White: The Board approved the October 13, 2026 meeting minutes with a correction to item V. by putting Mr. Johnson's statement before the overview of the presentation with the notation that Mr. Johnson read a statement submitted by Christine Johnson to the State of CT in 2021 in reference to proposed legislation.
PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY

III. GMS & FHS Data Presentation (Success & Challenges) with Action Plans - Attachment #1

Mr. Bass, with input from Jemal Davis, Samantha Singleton, and Keith Danieluk, gave an overview of the PowerPoint Data Presentation (Success & Challenges) with Action Plans.

Mr. Brown, with input from Amy McKenna, Carmita Hodge, Adam Diskin, and Ben Moon, gave an overview of the PowerPoint Data Presentation (Success & Challenges) with Action Plans.

The Board held in-depth discussions with each school.

IV. Discussion re: Vehicle Purchases

Mr. Kilpatrick gave an overview of the need for vehicle purchases. It was stated to use the money ($250,000) from the Town to purchase trucks (3) from the $250,000 for 2 plow trucks and 1 pick up or van.

This item will be placed on the regular Board agenda for a formal vote.

V. Review of Referral Tracking Sheet – Attachment #2

Mr. Thomas requested two referrals:

- Discussion w/the AI Committee re: AI policy
- Discussion after settlement review re: Robotics

Mr. Johnson requested two referrals:

- Review of Tier 1 & 2 for ELA on quarterly basis
- Data review session with FHS re: testing

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ackerman, Johnson: The meeting adjourned at 9:57 p.m.


Our Mission is Teaching and Learning
GROTON
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS
Groton, Connecticut
GMS/FHS
School Improvement Plan
October 19, 2026

GPS Strategic Plan Pillars

1



2



3



4



5



Key Performance Indicators

Academics	Attendance	Behavior	College and Career Readiness	Communications & Climate
Accountability Index	Average Daily Attendance	# of Incidents of In-School Suspensions	% On-track for Graduation	% of K-5 Students Who Can Identify a Trusted Adult
DPI- ELA	% of Students Chronically Absent	# of Incidents of Out of School Suspensions	% Taking CCR Courses	% of 6-12 Students Who Can Identify a Trusted Adult
DPI- Math	Average # of Staff Absences		Postsecondary Entrance	% of Staff Reporting PD is Connected to Position
DPI- Science			4-Year Graduation Rate	% of Parents Who Believe there are Opportunities for Caregiver Involvement

Groton Middle School: Who We Are...

School Enrollment	877
Special Programming	A continuum of supports including special educators, speech pathologists, school psychologists, school social workers, school counselors, OTs, and PTs, and are available to meet the needs of all students with disabilities.
Student Makeup	• 46% Free/Reduced Eligible • 22% Special Education • 4% Multilingual learners
Chronic Absenteeism Trend	• 2024- 20.2% • 2025- 20.4% • 2026- 14.3%
Noteworthy Happenings	**"Fostering a culture of high engagement and deep inquiry, while ensuring students receive the targeted social-emotional support necessary to thrive"** • Student engagement through STEAM and MYP • Increased focus on getting students to attend and be engaged in classroom instruction (94.7% daily attendance to date compared to 85% at this time last year) • New this year: Naval Science 1 for 8th grade (one section, full year)

Groton Middle School

2025-2026 Data Highlights:

Attendance Improvements

- Reduction in Chronic Absenteeism from 20.4% to 14.3%
- Average Daily Attendance increased from 92.9% to 94.2 %

Reduction in Out of School Suspensions

- 87 instances in 2024-25; 32 instances in 2025-26

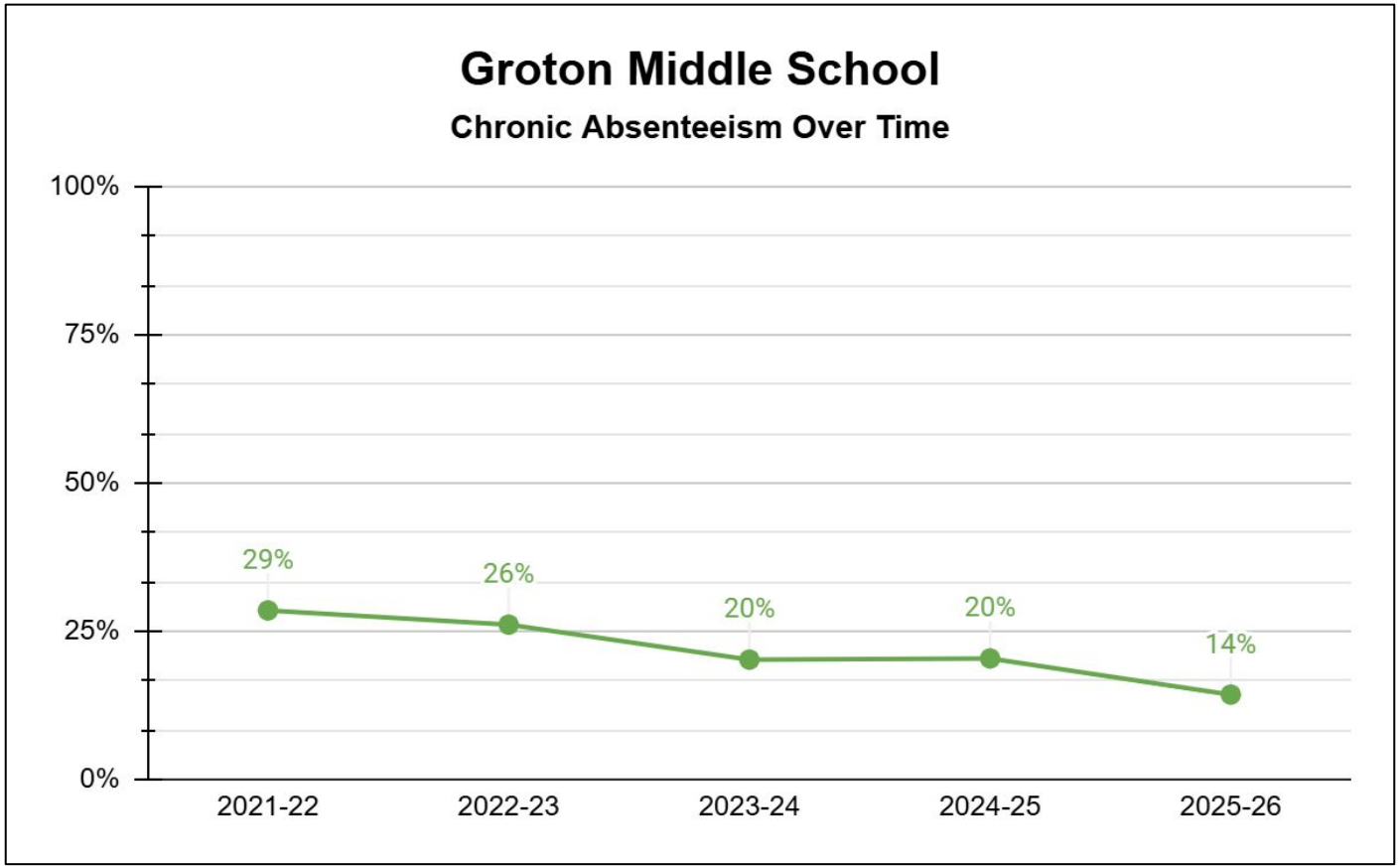
Academic

- Cohort Growth
  - Last 3 years: Consistent growth from grade 6 to grade 7 in Proficiency / Goal in both Math and ELA
- Year-Over-Year Improvement (non-cohort):
  - 3 year trend in grade 6 and 7 show consistent growth in both Proficiency / Goal in both Math and ELA

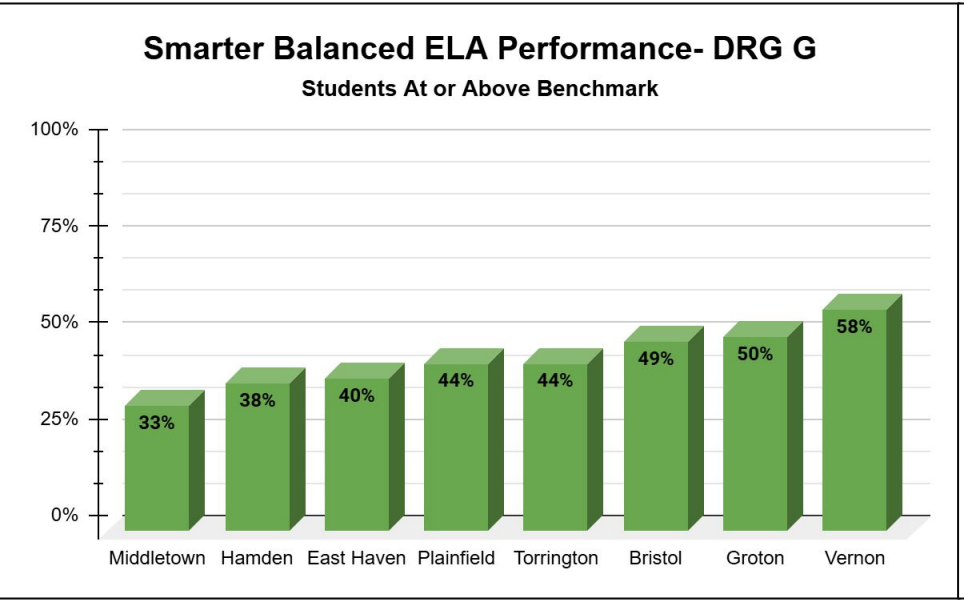
	ELA 2023	ELA 2024	ELA 2025	ELA 2026	Change SY25/SY26
Grade 6	36.90%	42.40%	44.40%	49%	4.60%
Grade 7	47.70%	44.80%	48.90%	53%	4.10%
Grade 8	50.20%	52.60%	39.00%	49%	10%

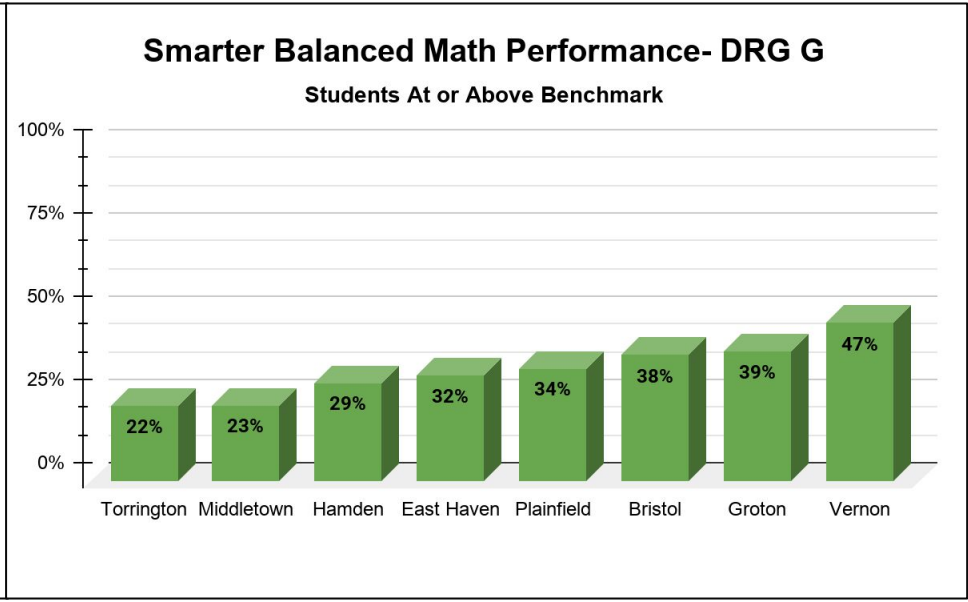
	Math 2023	Math 2024	Math 2025	Math 2026	Change SY25/SY26
Grade 6	21.50%	31.20%	34.20%	40%	5.80%
Grade 7	41.00%	34.30%	43.60%	44%	0.40%
Grade 8	34.60%	32.70%	27.00%	31%	4%

Groton Middle School

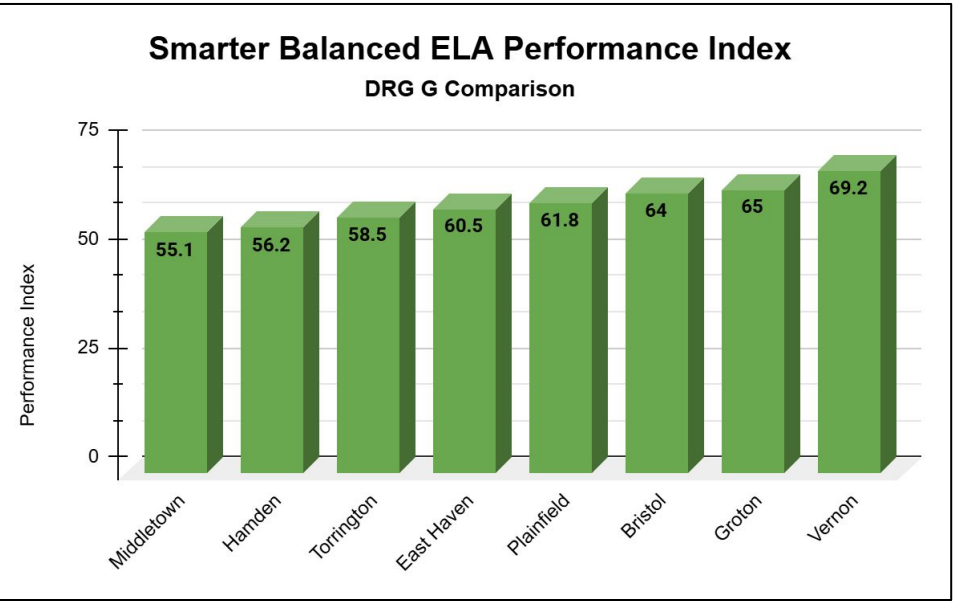


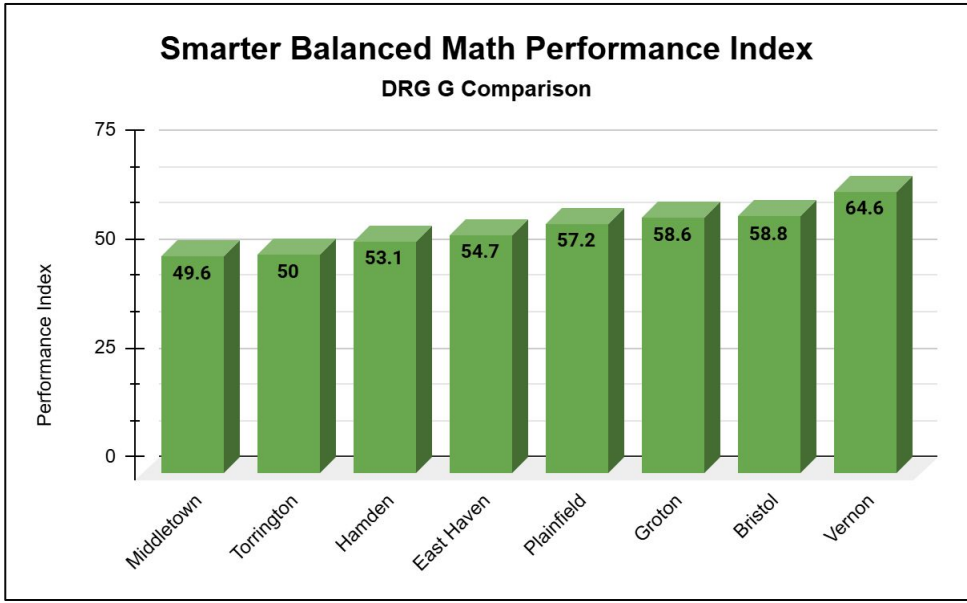
Groton Middle School



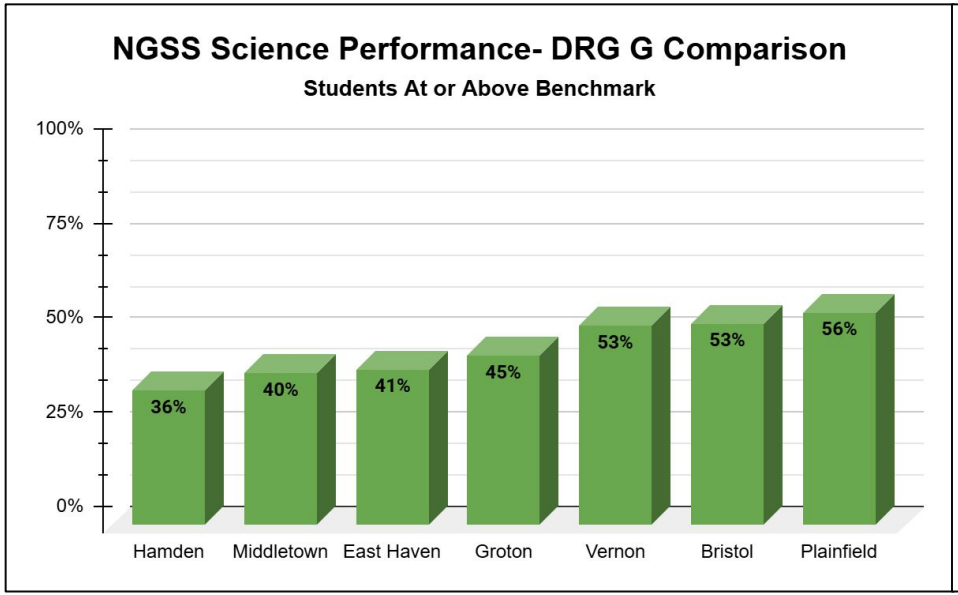


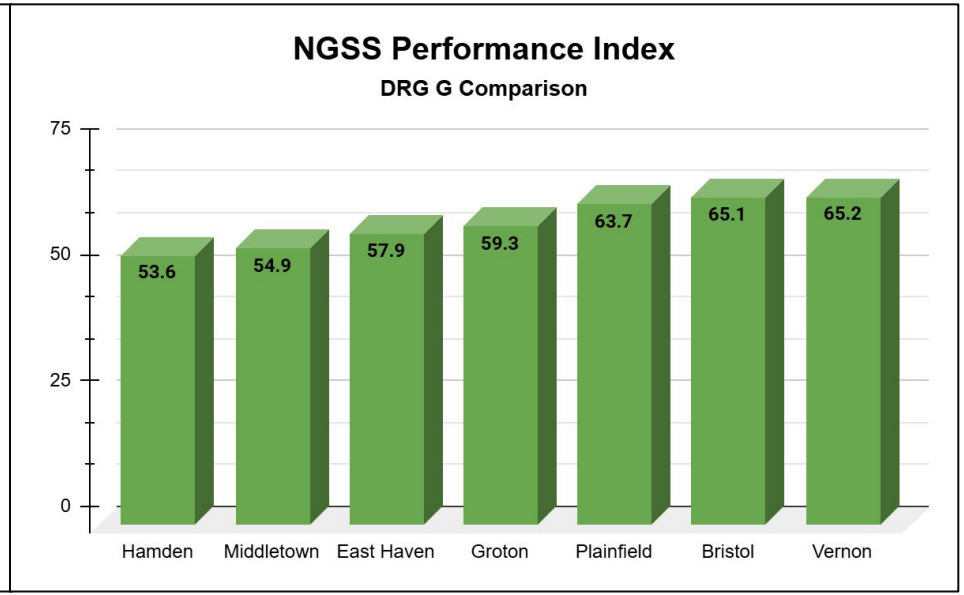
Groton Middle School





Groton Middle School





Groton Middle School

2025-2026 Challenges:

Instructional Practices & Resources

- Piloting potential new resources in Math and ELA
- Impact of shared instructional spaces

Chronic Absenteeism,

- Chronic Absenteeism moved from 20.4 to 14.3
    - Work still to be done

Student Discipline

- Suspension rates dropped; however, Hispanic students still account for the largest number of referrals and in school suspensions

Groton Middle School

District Priorities	School Action Steps
Attendance: Increase student and staff engagement by emphasizing the importance of daily attendance	• Standardize attendance protocols across grade-level teams. • Use prior-year attendance data to identify at-risk students early. • Clarify Tier 2 and Tier 3 responsibilities, documentation timelines, and progress monitoring.
Culture and Climate: Foster a safe and inclusive environment that engages and empowers students, families, and staff	• Use student survey data to identify support needs aligned to SEL competencies. • Identify staff connections and provide informal student check-ins. • Use Restorative Circles to build community and relationships. • Continue to use SEL tutors to support student engagement.
Student Achievement: Provide all students with standards-aligned curricula, student-centered instruction, and engaging learning experiences that support the Vision of the Graduate.	• Implement new curriculum resources of Wit & Wisdom (ELA) and Illustrative Mathematics. Review and enhance science curriculum standards alignment. • Utilize *InnerOrbi*t assessment tool to provide students with a realistic assessment experience which mirrors the format of the NGSS assessment and provide teachers with actionable data to guide instruction. • Use assessment data to make informed decisions about instruction and improve student outcomes • Leverage MTSS systems, structures and instruction to ensures equitable access to grade-level outcomes.

Fitch High School: Who We Are…

School Enrollment	883 Students
Special Programming	• AP, ECE, IB (MYP, DP & CP) • Expanded Pathways: (NJROTC, Nursing/EMT, EdRising, Engineering - PLTW, Manufacturing) • Outstanding opportunities for our students through arts, athletics, clubs and activities
Student Makeup	• 50% Free/Reduced Eligible • 17% Special Education • 5% Limited English Proficiency
Chronic Absenteeism Trend	• 2024- 24.9% • 2025- 26.3% • 2026- 25.0%
Noteworthy Happenings	• Participation has steadily increased in our program offerings. Our dual enrollment course offerings have expanded along with participants. Our MYP personal project engagement has steadily increased with a school-wide audience for presentations.

Fitch High School

2025-2026 Data Highlights:

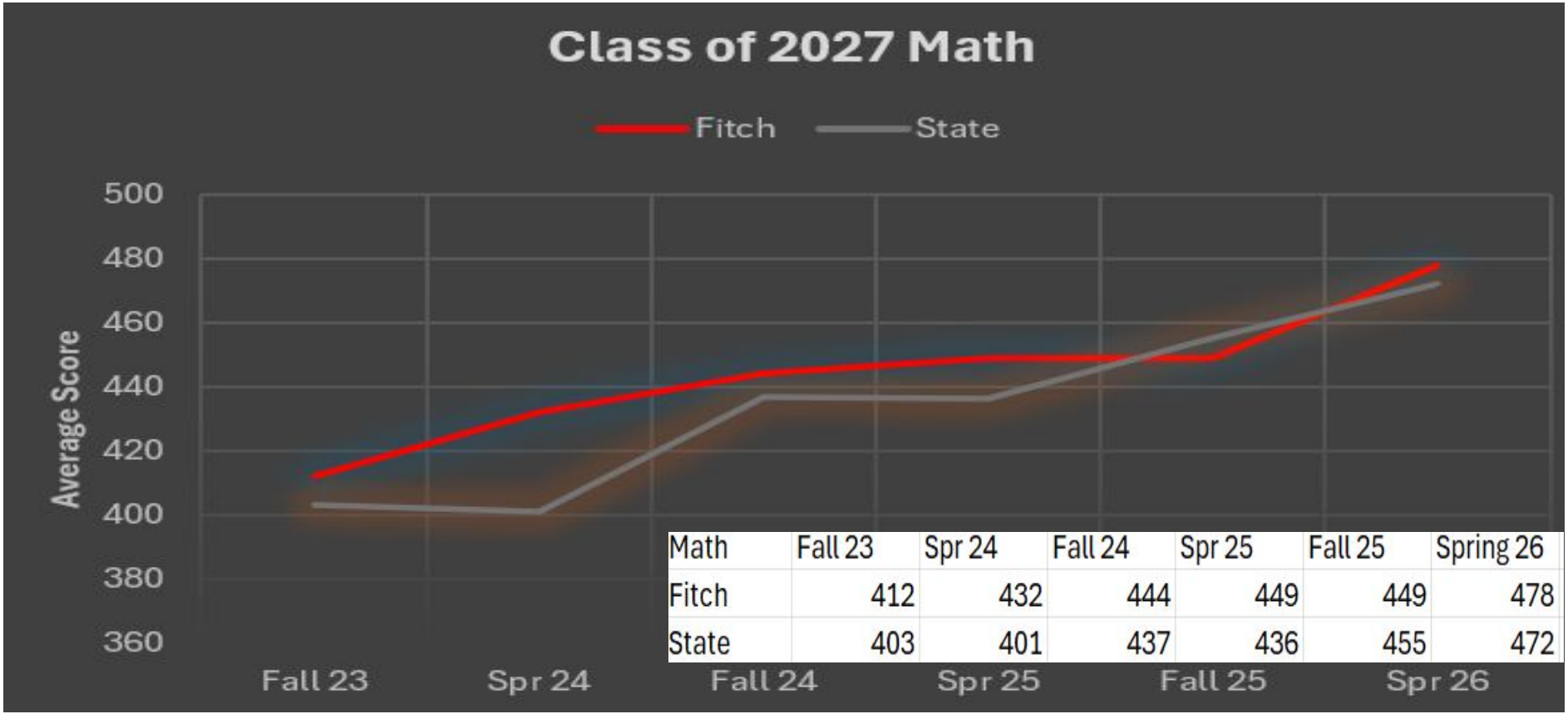
- SAT Performance continues to outperform state & 1st in DRG for Math and ELA (72.2 points higher than DRG Average).
- Gains in NGSS Science: Grew from 42% to 58% (Cohort increase 11.2%).
- Increased Enrollment in College Credit Courses
  - Class of 2026 -
    - 67% sat for an AP exam (compared to 37% nationally)
    - 75% took a college credit course (IB, AP, UConn ECE, ECSU, TRCC)
- Social Emotional Health Focus
  - Cell Phone - 689 incidents addressed
  - SEAL days and ABC Chats
  - 16% Drop in office referrals (3137 to 2648) and 31% drop in OSS (416 to 287)
- Climate Survey Results Show Significant Progress when compared to 2023 Results

Average Score English - Class of 2027 Cohort Analysis



ERW	Fall 23	Spr 24	Fall 24	Spr 25	Fall 25	Spr 26
Fitch	419	454	464	469	478	497
State	400	416	457	450	477	494

Fitch High School - Class of 2027 Cohort Analysis



Math	Fall 23	Spr 24	Fall 24	Spr 25	Fall 25	Spring 26
Fitch	412	432	444	449	449	478
State	403	401	437	436	455	472

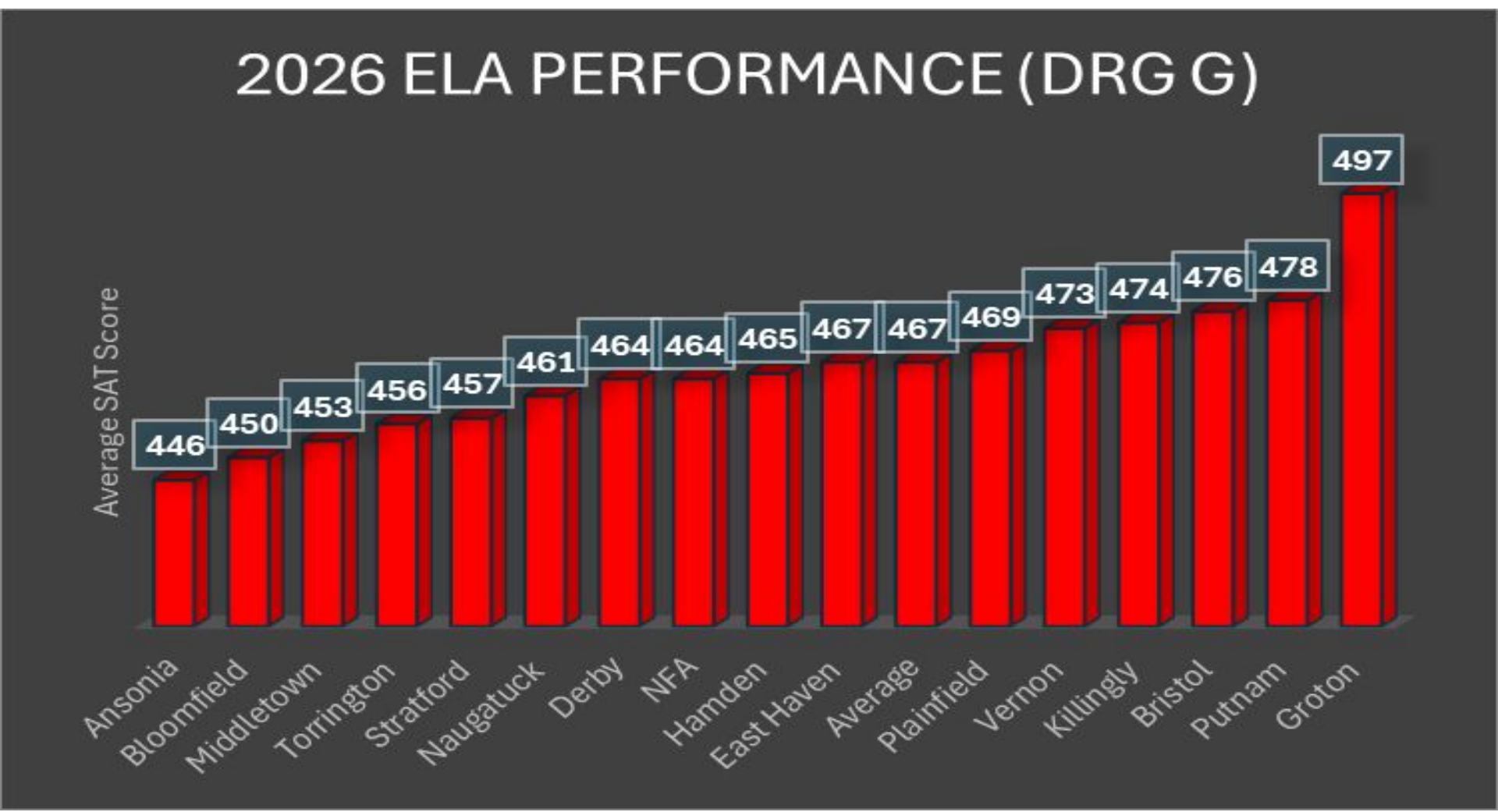
DRG G School Comparison in Connecticut

District Reference Groups - System that classifies school districts by socioeconomic status to group them for various state programs & funding. The CSDE used seven variables to determine the original DRGs in 2006. The same variables used during updated 2023 DRGs:

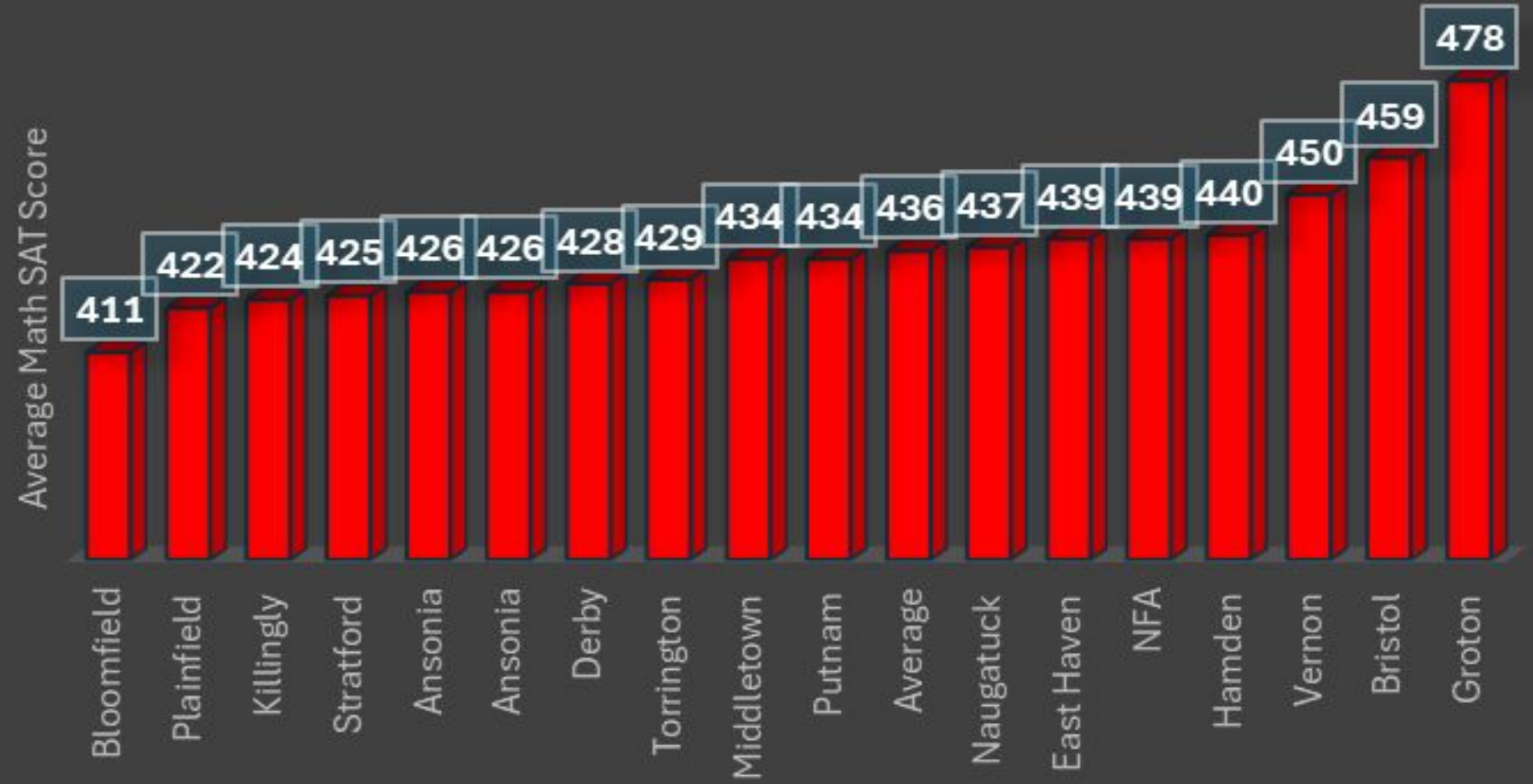
- ❏ Family Income (Median Income)
- ❏ Parental Education Level - (% Bachelors or higher)
- ❏ Parent Occupational Level - (Executive, managerial, & professional specialty occupations
- ❏ Family Structure

- ❏ Poverty Levels (F & R Lunch)
- ❏ Home Language - (% of families speaking non- English language)
- ❏ District Enrollment - (Gross enrollment for the local public school district)

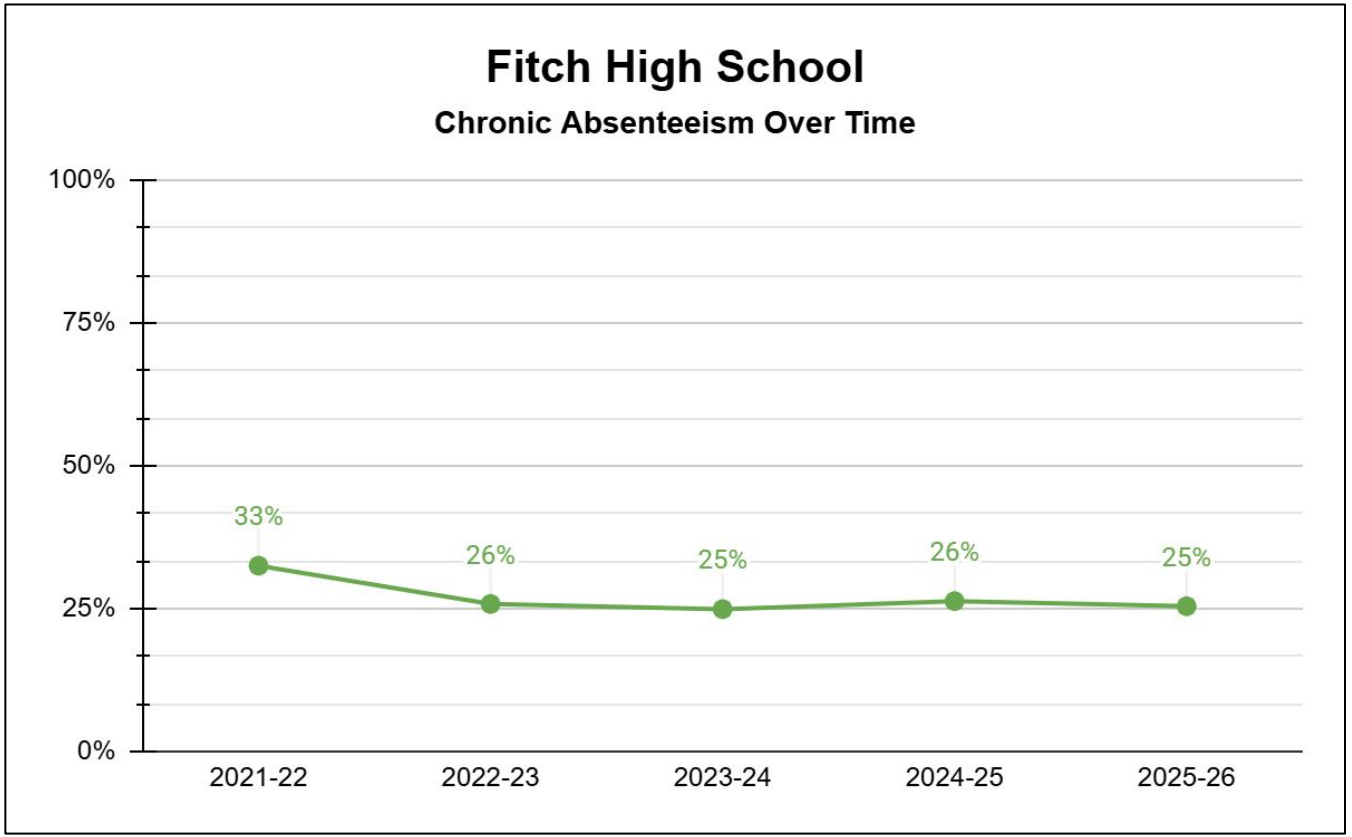
2026 ELA PERFORMANCE (DRG G)



AVERAGE MATH SAT SCORE (DRG G)



Fitch High School



Fitch High School

2025-2026 Challenges:

- Attendance - 25% Chronic Absenteeism
  - Proactive Meetings and Regular Progress Monitoring Occurred
  - Revised Credit Appeal Process
- Social Media Challenges
  - Cell Phone Policy reduce in-school incidents
- Climate Survey
  - Student Participation decrease 479 to 159
  - Family Participation at 131
- Maintenance & Appearance of Building (Phase 2 from 2007)
  - Vintage Building / Gymnasium and locker rooms (1982)

Fitch High School

District Priorities	School Action Steps
Attendance: Increase student and staff engagement by emphasizing the importance of daily attendance	Student Survey, 95%ers Incentives, Surprise Attendance Days, “Who Won the Week?” EAR Process, Caring Connectors, LEAP, Attendance Agreements, Tier 3 Attendance Plans
Culture and Climate: Foster a safe and inclusive environment that engages and empowers students, families, and staff	Implemented Restorative Practices • RISE Room as part of reflection process • Proactive approach to reduce ISS/OSS • Revised Reflection Process for Detentions Ignite and use Falcon Pride to ensure Fitch is a community to be proud of.
Student Achievement: Provide all students with standards-aligned curricula, student-centered instruction, and engaging learning experiences that support the Vision of the Graduate.	Ensure every student identifies and pursues pathway/program PSAT, CFAs to inform &improve teaching and learning.

Our Roadmap to Success





District Improvement Plan



School Improvement Plan

Key Performance Indicators and State Data Measure Progress

BOARD OF EDUCATION - REFERRAL TRACKING SHEET

Revised: October 14, 2026

CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTION			
Referral #	**Date Initiated**	**Subject**	**Date Completed**
R2023-22	11/3/23	Development of a schedule for curriculum updates in all subjects	
R2023-23	12/18/23	Discussion re: Reading & Writing K-12 (AJ) – Discussed at COW on 4/28/2025	Ongoing
R2024-34	12/2/24	Discussion re: the study of IB (IT)	
R2024-35	12/2/24	Review of the math curriculum (BW) – Discussed on 4/4/2025 & 11/24/2025	Ongoing
~~R2026-7~~	~~11/3/25~~	~~Discussion of World Language Offerings (BW)~~	7/27/2026
R2026-8	7/27/26	Discussion re: other metrics to measure student success (AJ)	
R2026-9	7/27/26	Discussion re: World Language in the elementary schools (BW)	
R2026-10	7/27/26	Discussion re: the number of students taking World Language Courses & ASL (AJ)	

POLICY			
Referral #	**Date Initiated**	**Subject**	**Date Completed**
R2024-31	10/15/24	Discussion re: P1312 Public Complaints process and procedure (IT)	
R2026-1	2/23/26	Review policy P3542.43 Food Service-Charging Policy (SC)	
R2026-2	2/23/26	Development of a policy re: lawsuits filed against the district/BOE/employees be reported by the Superintendent/Attorney to the Board within 30 days (IT)	
R2026-11	7/27/26	Attendance policy revision (AJ)	

FINANCE/FACILITIES			
Referral #	**Date Initiated**	**Subject**	**Date Completed**
R2025-2	4/21/25	Discussion re: a four-month Facilities Plan (BW)	
R2025-3	4/21/25	Discussion re: staffing levels relative to the budget (MW)	
R2025-11	10/14/25	Discussion re: launching an employee efficiency suggestion campaign (JW)	
R2026-4	2/23/26	Develop a calendar of the meetings (more formalized) similar to the Town Council's (IT)	
R2026-5	7/27/26	Explore strategies to economize fuel usage in the buildings and on busses (MW)	
R2026-12	7/27/26	Discussion re: setting up automatic payment accounts (AJ)	

COMMUNICATIONS			
Referral #	**Date Initiated**	**Subject**	**Date Completed**
R2024-20	5/28/24	Discussion re: how the district communicates and engages families of children of all levels of abilities (JW)	

COW			
Referral #	**Date Initiated**	**Subject**	**Date Completed**
R2024-10	4/15/24	Discussion re: the Board's interest in drafting a policy regarding family and BOE notification of testing data (AJ)	
~~R2024-13~~	~~4/15/24~~	~~Review of the Tier 2 & Tier 3 interventions for ELA in the K-5 curriculum (AJ)~~	10/13/2026
R2024-25	9/16/24	Discussion re: climate survey data details and consistent tracker (IT)	
R2024-30	10/15/24	Discussion regarding open communication with state delegation to allow for interpreters or interpretative technology of SBAC testing (IT)	
R2024-33	10/28/24	Discussion re: space - or lack thereof - in schools (MS)	
R2024-36	12/2/24	Update re: Robotics (IT)	
R2025-1	3/17/25	Discussion re: an Early Childhood Center (MW) – Discussed on 2/28/2026	Ongoing
R2025-5	4/21/25	Discussion re: a simple student exit survey (MS)	